

Minutes

Judicial Education Committee Retreat January 23, 2004-- 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Sheraton North Hotel, Indianapolis

1. **Committee Members present:**
Earl Penrod (Chair), Ted Boehm, Chris Burnham, Barb Collins, Steve David, Greg Donat, Bob Freese, Barbara Harcourt, Jane Magnus-Stinson, Doug Morton, Maggie Robb, Ted Todd, Jim Williams, Mike Witte.
2. **Staff present:**
Vicki Davis, Anne Jordan, and Jane Seigel, and Cathy Springer.
3. **Judicial Education: The Big Picture:**
 - a. The committee members discussed the questions “what is the primary function of judicial education” and “what does it mean to members on an individual basis.” Staff members compiled the following answers to these questions: results in fewer reversals; used both as a tool and content for performing functions; combats isolation; change agent; serves to lighten/ease the burden of judging; inspires as well as educates; confidence builder; provides structure or framework for problem solving; impacts level of public confidence in the system; undergrids the pursuit of justice; mechanism for the transmittal of new information; promotes uniformity; assists judicial officers to “get-it- right” in everyday decisions being made; promotes the sharing of ideas; helps judicial officers become more efficient and effective; helps to prevent burnout; provides collegiality.
 - b. The committee discussed the value of judicial education to judicial officers at large and what they want to get from it. The members came up with the following list: quick, easy, free and relevant CLE; skill building/how to programs; practical information; helps them do their job better; validates existing law, explains or highlights discretionary/gray areas and includes cutting edge knowledge/information; intellectual challenge; resource tool; opportunity to vent frustrations; rewarding/fun; opportunity to make a change and be a part of the future; networking tool.
4. **The Judicial Education Committee and Me:**
 - a. Committee members commented on what they individually bring to the Education Committee. The following were offered: a new judge perspective; perspective of a judge from a high volume court; a “consumer” of education with a wealth of educational experience; the perspective of the average judge capable of identifying with the needs of most judges; an “idea” person brainstorming sessions/programs; perspective of a person interested in teaching and who considers the work “we” do important; liaison with the Supreme Court; provide faculty assistance and resources and contacts with

other organizations/groups; and the perspective of a small rural court with limited resources.

- b. Are members satisfied with the work of the Committee? Yes, as shown by the good attendance at conferences; conferees sign in and stay; we get good feedback from the evaluations; the ideas members contribute are taken seriously and implemented; the committee's role is to submit concepts and staff will design the programs. A suggestion was made that more should be done with faculty development and it was noted that the judiciary is on the verge of a major change with the coming technology that will need to be addressed by the committee.
- c. Do we properly represent our colleagues? It was generally agreed that the membership is composed of varied experience although ethnic minorities are under-represented. There is no magistrate or senior judge representation on the committee but mechanisms exist to obtain that representation by contact through the existing conference committee structure. It was suggested that the committee members should reach out to "nay sayers." Staff members suggested the IJC visit counties and conduct focus groups regarding educational needs.

5. Judicial Education Programming:

- a. The role of the staff. Cathy Springer explained generally what the education staff does and provided handouts with more detailed information. The staff generally agreed that the value of the committee rested with generation of ideas and the sharing of topics, speakers, general thoughts and suggestions regarding education needs of the audience.
- b. What else can we do to improve education? Provide the materials on CDs and on the Judicial Center online library and create less dependence on paper. Create a monitored list-serve for judges interested in a specific topic. Develop online teaching/learning activities. Hold joint meetings, like the Bench-Bar. Generate online collections of individual judge's forms or best practices of an active judge. Send judges out-of-state for education. Do some joint programming with the federal bench. Provide more education to the IJC staff. Create a course with different skill levels, to be taught over a two or three year period.

6. Program specifics:

- a. April Judicial College. An overview of the courses was provided. Additional topics suggested: pro se issues, as it relates to new child support guidelines; public access to records; probate; pension evaluation; judicial writing; family law evidence and best practices; and mental health.
- b. September Conference (Evansville). Some suggestions were offered for sessions including: change in appellate rule and caselaw on sentencing; issues relating to DOC, such as calculation of credit time; and sitting as a Hearing Officer. Members discussed the need for plenary sessions at September and came to the conclusion such sessions are necessary for dispensing the business of the judiciary, but agreeing that it is difficult to be actively engaged with

450 participants in a meeting room. It was mentioned that one of the Evansville casino's offered to pay for entertainment at an evening function. Most members were not comfortable with that idea.

- c. December Conference. Suggested topics include: Public Access and Confidence in Courts; the Human Genome Project; Dealing with Diversity; Bias of Jurors (Judith Resnick, Yale).
- d. Present structure and approach of conferences. All agreed that the Spring Judicial College has taken hold and is accomplishing its objectives of more in-depth education and smaller classes. The only regret is that it is not set up for enhancing collegiality. The one day structure of the December conference has also become accepted by the judicial officers.

7. **Judicial Education Committee Structure and Approach:**

- a. Subcommittees. It was agreed the subcommittees should meet only if they have a specific task or project to work on. It was suggested that members rotate between the subcommittees. Some subcommittee work can be done via e-mail.
- b. Committee Meetings. It was agreed to keep Friday afternoons open for meetings. **On March 12, however, due to the Judicial Conference Board of Directors Meeting, the Education Committee will meet from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

8. **Retreat Wrap-up:**

The committee came up with a list of future actions that can be taken as a result of the meeting: staff road trips to meet and discuss needs with judges on perhaps a regional basis; create monitored list serve; create a course with different skill levels, to be taught over a two or three year period; and digitizing more course materials.

The Retreat adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Jordan and Vicki Davis